

FAITH

THE KEY TO RELEASING HEAVEN ON EARTH

COURSE GUIDE

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A NOTE FROM JOHN

Hello!

Thank you for choosing to study *Faith: The Key to Releasing Heaven on Earth*. Faith is foundational to following God, for it not only makes it possible to have a relationship with Him; it also gives us access to all His promises.

Throughout this guide, you'll find lesson summaries, reflective questions, and challenges designed to help you strengthen your faith.

If you're ready to see God do the impossible *for you and through you*, then it's time to release heaven on earth!

Here we go!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John".

LESSON ONE

What is faith?

When we function by faith, we'll see the impossible made possible. Through faith, we bridge the eternal to the temporal, the supernatural to the natural, and the Kingdom realm to the earthly realm.

In this lesson, we learned:

- Faith is always present. God lives in the eternal now and makes Himself known as "I am."
- Faith is the substance of things hoped for—faith sees things that don't exist as if they already did.
- Faith sees what it believes as more real than what exists in the present.

Reflect

1. What is faith? Write your definition.
2. How does faith differ from hope? Explain the difference!
3. Why is faith important to bridge the gap between the eternal to the temporal, the supernatural to the natural, and the Kingdom realm to the earthly realm?

Read

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.
(Hebrews 11:1)

Respond

Over the next 12 weeks, at the end of every lesson, you'll find exercises for you to apply that are designed to help strengthen your faith. Let's begin with the challenge below!

Pray this simple prayer. *Father, strengthen my faith. Help me to believe Your Word and promises. As I journey through this study, I pray for this message to sink deep into my heart and to empower me to believe for the impossible. Help me to live by faith, not by sight.*

LESSON TWO

Why Is Faith Important?

Faith is vitally important in the life of a believer. The fact that we're called *believers* is because we *believe*. And because we believe, not only is it possible to have a relationship with God; we're also given access to all His promises.

In this lesson, we learned:

- Faith pleases God. Throughout the Gospels, nothing pleased Jesus more than those who had faith. Conversely, nothing displeased Him more than unbelief.
- The only way to be saved is through faith.
- Living by faith is living from the heart—the very core of our being, where faith dwells.

Reflect

1. Why is faith important? List some of the benefits that result from living by faith.
2. Where does faith originate? Why do you think God designed it this way?
3. What does it mean to live by faith and not by sight?

Read

Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)

Respond

Make a list of five things you're believing God to do for you. With each request, find a promise in the Bible that applies to what you desire.

LESSON THREE

Faith and God's Promises

Faith activates the power and promises of God's Word. When we believe what God promises, we'll see those promises fulfilled in our life. But if faith is absent, God's Word becomes ineffective.

In this lesson, we learned:

- God's promises are not automatic—they have to be appropriated by faith.
- When we come into agreement with God's Word by faith, we'll see His Word established in our life.
- Sometimes, God uses desperate circumstances to stir up our faith to believe for the impossible.

Reflect

1. Have you struggled to believe God's Word and promises? If so, why?
2. Why can you have confidence in the power of God's Word and promises?
3. Why do you think it's important to God that you believe His Word and promises? What do you think you're communicating to Him through faith in His Word? On the contrary, what are you communicating to Him through unbelief?

Read

For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. (Hebrews 4:2)

Respond

Faith sees what it believes as more real than what exists in the present. This involves using our imagination—that creative faculty in the mind where ideas and visions are produced. In a quiet space, take time to reflect on the list created at the end of lesson two.

Using your imagination, picture the promises of God being fulfilled in your life—just like God instructed Abraham to look at the stars in the sky when he was believing for a child. As you do this, you'll find yourself becoming excited and expectant to receive the answers to your prayers.

LESSON FOUR

Faith and Answered Prayer

Prayer that is fueled by faith releases God's answers, will, and Kingdom into the earth. Through prayer, we give God permission to work on our behalf.

In this lesson, we learned:

- Not all prayers are answered—only prayers made in faith.
- Prayers that are fervent and persistent produce great power.
- All things are possible to those who believe.

Reflect

1. Consider the way you pray. Are your prayers fervent and persistent, filled with faith?
2. How does *persistent* prayer differ from *repetitive* prayer?
3. How can you pray fervent and persistent prayers?

Read

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. (James 1:5–8)

Respond

Using the list created in the second lesson, begin praying over your requests fervently and persistently. If it helps, set a time within your day to specifically pray over your list.

LESSON FIVE

How to Get Faith

God's Word is the source of our faith. When we hear God's Word, faith is awaked in our hearts. And the more we hear God's Word; the more faith can fill our hearts.

In this lesson, we learned:

- Faith can be strengthened and increased as we feed on God's Word.
- The measure of "thought and study" we give to God's Word determines how much His Word is planted in our hearts.
- As believers, we are to be careful what we hear. It's vital that we prioritize God's Word over other voices, such as the news and social media.

Reflect

1. Is God's Word a priority in your life? How often do you spend time reading and hearing God's Word?
2. In what area is your faith stronger than in other areas? Why is your faith strong in that area?
3. In what areas do you need more faith? How can your faith grow in these areas?

Read

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Hebrews 10:17)

Respond

Search and study God's Word in the area where you lack faith. As you do this, write down the scriptures and promises you discover. Once you've completed this list, spend time reading these verses and promises out loud. Do this repeatedly until your heart begins to soak in God's Word and becomes filled with it. You'll find your faith growing in that area.

LESSON SIX

How to Release Your Faith (Part 1)

Faith originates in the heart and is released through our words. Once released, faith sets into effect God's promises.

In this lesson, we learned:

- We must believe before we receive.
- Faith calls forth those things that be not as though they were.
- Our words are evidence of what we believe.

Reflect

1. Why are your words important when it comes to releasing your faith?
2. Jesus tells us in Mark 11:22 to have the faith of God. In verse 23, He explains what that practically looks like. What is the emphasis of verse 23?
3. What is the difference between declaring change and praying for change? Using John's story about the Hayman fire, explain the difference.

Read

So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. (Mark 11:22–24)

Respond

Once again, using the list created in the second lesson, write down declarations for what you're believing God to do in your life. Once you've completed your list, place it somewhere you can view it often. Speak these declarations of faith as often as you like.

LESSON SEVEN

How to Release Your Faith (Part 2)

The words we speak reveal what's in our heart. When our hearts are filled with faith, our words will be also! They will be words of life, not death; blessing, not cursing; faith, not fear.

In this lesson, we learned:

- We cannot tame our tongue; we must first change our heart.
- Our words are an outflow of what is in our hearts.
- It's critical that we guard what fills our heart, for it shapes the direction of our life.

Reflect

1. Faith requires aligning our words with God's Word. Consider the way you speak. Are your words in agreement with God's?
2. What fills your heart? Are you intentionally filling your mind and heart with God's Word?
3. When you pray, are there times when you need to be *declaring* things done more than *asking* for things to be done?

Read

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit. (Proverbs 18:21)

Respond

Oftentimes, we say things without realizing the effect they could have. For example, it's easy to say things like, "I'm sick and tired of that," "The pain is killing me," or, "Poor baby." Pinpointing these statements may sound a little extreme, but think about it—if our words really do have power, then we're speaking into existence pain, death, and poverty.

With this challenge, identify statements you may say that seem harmless, but are harmful. Be intentional to stop this language and think of statements you can say to replace these expressions.

LESSON EIGHT

Increase Your Faith

There are levels to faith. These levels range from little faith to great faith. We've all been given a measure of faith which we're responsible to steward. And we can either grow our faith, or we can neglect it.

In this lesson, we learned:

- Every time we obey God and exercise our faith, it will grow.
- Faith and works go hand in hand—because our faith becomes evident by our corresponding actions of obedience.
- To “believe” means “to obey.”

Reflect

1. In what ways has your faith grown? How has this been evident?
2. How have you increased your faith?
3. Why is it important for corresponding actions of obedience to accompany your faith?

Read

We are bound to thank God for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other. (2 Thessalonians 1:3)

Respond

Meet with a trusted friend and ask them if they've noticed an area in your faith that has been compromised. If anything is pointed out, then pray together about that specific area of your faith to be changed and strengthened.

LESSON NINE

The Testing of Your Faith

Under pressure, our faith exhibits its true colors. Because we'll never know how strong our faith is until it's tested. Then what we truly believe will become evident.

In this lesson, we learned:

- Patience sustains our faith until the answers come.
- God uses times of testing to grow and develop our faith and character.
- Our faith is tested like gold is refined by fire.

Reflect

1. In what ways have you experienced your faith being tested? How did you respond in those moments?
2. Why does God allow our faith to be tested? What is the purpose of these tests?
3. Why is patience important to sustain your faith during testing and trials?

Read

Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work, so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way. (James 1:2–4 MSG)

Respond

Spend some time in prayer asking God to point out areas in your faith and character that need growth. As He reveals those areas to you, ask Him for the grace to grow in those areas. Remember, Jesus disciplines and corrects those He loves (see Hebrews 12:5–11; Revelation 3:19).

LESSON TEN

The Fight of Faith

Keeping the faith is vital to finishing strong and laying hold of eternal life. Without actively contending for our faith, we'll become susceptible to falling away from it. That's why the fight of faith is a battle all believers must be engaged in.

In this lesson, we learned:

- The common enemies to our faith are adverse circumstances, distractions, words of unbelief, and bad theology or tradition.
- Becoming lovers of truth will protect us from false teaching, false Christs being presented, and an incorrect view of grace.
- The love of truth is rooted in the fear of the Lord, and it sharpens our discernment and keeps us free from error.

Reflect

1. Gleaning from the parable of the sower, in what ways have you experienced your faith under attack? What has been your response to these attacks?
2. Distraction is one of the enemy's strategies to pull us away from our faith. What are the biggest distractions you encounter? How can you be prepared to overcome these distractions?
3. Becoming lovers of truth protects us from deception. Do you love and prioritize the study of God's Word? If not, how can you begin to prioritize time in God's Word?

Read

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. (1 Timothy 6:12)

Respond

Begin a Bible reading plan (if you haven't already started one) and practice the daily discipline of reading God's Word. You can begin by reading through the Gospels, and the YouVersion Bible app is a great study tool for you to use!

LESSON ELEVEN

Gospel Examples

Throughout the Gospels, we discover Jesus performing a plethora of healings, miracles, and deliverances. Everywhere Jesus was met with faith, God's kingdom was released on the earth: Blind eyes and death ears were opened, diseases were healed, and those tormented by evil spirits were set free.

In this lesson, we learned:

- God responds to persistent faith.
- Faith makes all things possible.
- God, at times, also moved in His sovereignty.

Reflect

1. As you consider Jesus's miracles, which one stood out to you the most? Why?
2. Throughout His ministry, what was the thing that pleased Jesus the most? What was the thing that frustrated and displeased Him?
3. Have you experienced a miracle or healing from Jesus? Describe what happened.

Read

Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." (Matthew 9:29)

Respond

If you know of a family member, friend, or neighbor who needs healing, step out in faith and pray for them. Lay your hand upon them and pray healing over them.

LESSON TWELVE

Practical Counsel

Faith should not be reduced to a formula, but there are practical steps to be applied when exercising your faith. These steps include hearing God's Word, believing God's Word, praying God's Word, and speaking God's Word.

In this lesson, we learned:

- Faith keeps us spiritually alive and awake.
- We must hold fast to our confession of faith, despite what our outward circumstances look like.
- One of the ways we *believe* that we *receive* is by thanking God in advance for the answer to prayer before we receive it.

Reflect

1. Consider the steps mentioned to exercising your faith. Are you hearing, believing, praying, and speaking God's Word?
2. As you've journeyed through this study, how has your faith grown? How has your faith been challenged?
3. Now that you've been equipped to practically apply your faith, who in your life can you share these truths with?

Read

Do not become sluggish but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (Hebrews 6:12)

Respond

Is there something you're believing God to do in your life? If you've applied the steps mentioned in this lesson, then begin to thank God in advance for the answer to your prayer!

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